

Reagan, Gorbachev to send greetings

MOSCOW (R) — Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev and U.S. President Ronald Reagan will make unprecedented television broadcasts to each other's nations on New Year's Day, the Soviet Foreign Ministry said Friday. Spokesman Vladimir Lomeiko told a news briefing the two leaders' pre-recorded New Year's greetings would be shown at 1800 GMT — 9 p.m. Moscow time and 1 p.m. Eastern Standard Time. He said the Soviet transmission would coincide with the start of the Soviet Union's main evening news programme. The U.S. president and the leader of the Soviet Communist Party have never before exchanged New Year's greetings on television. Former President Richard Nixon spoke on Soviet Television when visiting the Soviet Union in 1972. Mr. Reagan and Mr. Gorbachev met in Geneva last month for the first U.S.-Soviet summit since 1979.

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Majali returns after meeting

AMMAN (J.T.) — Deputy Prime Minister and Education Minister Abdul Wahab Al Majali returned home from Tunis on Friday after taking part in meetings of the Arab League Educational, Cultural and Scientific Organisation (ALECSO). In an arrival statement to Jordan Television Mr. Majali said the conference discussed the organisation's activities and all the projects they included and that Jordan's share of the organisation's budget was good. During his residence in Tunisia, Mr. Majali met with Tunisian Premier Mohammad Mzali and discussed with him bilateral relations and scopes of cooperation. Mr. Majali also conveyed greetings of His Majesty King Hussein and those of Prime Minister Zaid Rifai to President Bourguiba and the Tunisian government. Mr. Mzali also requested Mr. Majali to convey the greetings of President Bourguiba and the Tunisian government to King Hussein, His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan, Mr. Rifai and the Jordanian Government.

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Police break up Cairo rally

CAIRO (AP) — Without using violence, security men broke up on Friday a post-prayer mosque rally in support of a policeman on trial for killing seven Israelis, witnesses said. They said several dozen people were arrested. The action at the 1,000-year-old Al Azhar Mosque, one of Cairo's largest and best known, occurred during and after Friday noon prayers. Opposition political parties and anti-government fundamentalist groups had called the rally to express solidarity with Suleiman Khater, a 24-year-old police sergeant on trial by a military court. He is charged with the Oct. 5 fatal shootings of seven Israelis near a police post in the Sinai desert close to the border with Israel.

Tripoli cleric injured in attack

BEIRUT (AP) — A militant cleric was wounded in a street ambush on Friday, Beirut radio stations said unidentified gunmen shot Sheikh Hashem Minkara as he drove through a street in the port city of Tripoli, 80 kilometres north of Beirut. Sheikh Minkara, the second-in-command of the Islamic Unification Movement (Tawheed), was rushed to a hospital with three gunshot wounds in the hip, thigh and leg, the reports said.

PLO official lauds Zafer Al Masri's 'courageous step'

AMMAN (J.T.) — Mr. Mahmoud Abbas (Abu Mazen), member of the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) Executive Committee and head of the PLO national relations department, described the appointment of Mr. Zafer Al Masri as mayor of Nabulus as a wise and courageous step. Mr. Abu Mazen, commenting on the appointment of Mr. Masri, said that such a step, "which was taken at a time when the Israeli occupation authorities are planning to Judaize all institutions and municipalities in the occupied territories, is designed to serve the interests of Nabulus inhabitants and to provide them with the necessary services."

Israel conducting nuclear tests, Novosti says

AMMAN (J.T.) — Israel is conducting underground nuclear tests in the Negev Desert, the Soviet News Agency Novosti reported. Novosti said that Israel acquires missiles equipped with 40 nuclear heads. Israel is strengthening its nuclear capability, and deploying tactical nuclear weapons which are less expensive than the U.S.-made Pershing missiles, Novosti said. The report was carried by the Palestinian News Agency, WAFA.

Islamabad prepares to end martial law

ISLAMABAD (R) — Pakistan's civilian cabinet met on Friday to discuss final preparations for ending eight and a half years of martial law, the longest period of military rule in the country's 38-year history.

17 killed, 100 injured in attacks on El Al at Rome and Vienna

PLO condemns assaults, says it has no role whatsoever in them

Combined agency dispatches

AT LEAST 17 people were killed and 100 injured on Friday as gunmen firing wildly and hurling grenades attacked Israeli airline check-in counters at international airports in Rome and Vienna.

The Israeli Foreign Ministry tried to link the attacks to the Palestine Liberation Organisation but PLO statements issued in Amman and Tunis condemned the assaults and said the organisation had nothing to do with the attacks.

The attack at Rome's Fiumicino airport by up to six gunmen, said by Italian television to be Arabic-speaking, ended with at least 14 people dead and 68 hurt. It began as one gunman hurled a grenade at the Israeli El Al airline desk, crowded with passengers checking luggage for a flight to Tel Aviv.

Three gunmen were among the dead and two others were captured, police said.

At Vienna's Schwechat airport, three people died and about 30 were injured in the shooting, explosions and final gunfire which followed the assault by two men described by police as of Arab origin.

Police said the gunmen stormed into the crowded area near the El Al desk, hurling grenades along the floor and firing automatic weapons. They fled in a car driven

'Abu Nidal' group claims responsibility for attacks

MADRID (R) — A telephone caller to a Spanish radio station said Friday's twin airport attacks were carried out by a group calling itself the Palestinian Abu Nidal Organisation of the Costa del Sol, a radio station spokesman said.

The claim was made in a call to the SER private station chain in Malaga, the spokesman said. The caller described himself as a member of the radical organisation and said it was responsible for the attacks at Vienna and Rome airports.

"We have not taken this claim seriously," the spokesman said. "Abu Nidal is a radical Palestine leader, not an organisation."

The spokesman told Reuters SER would not broadcast the claim and police in Malaga were investigating the call.

She saw three men open fire as she was checking in on a TWA flight to New York.

She said she fell to the ground and saw a wounded gunman flashing a victory signal with his fingers as he died.

Judge Dominico Sica, a top anti-terrorist investigator, told reporters that investigators were convinced the target was El Al, which was right next to TWA and Pan Am. He said that no one had claimed responsibility for the attack.

Mr. Sica said the arrested gunman had refused to answer any questions and their nationalities had not been determined.

Some passengers said El Al employees joined in the shooting. An Israeli embassy spokesman could not immediately confirm that Israelis had taken part in the

gunfight, and said he was still checking reports of Israeli casualties.

Italian officials said that among the people who died at the airport were two Greek men and a Greek woman, two Americans, an Algerian, two Mexicans and four Arabs.

The officials included the three dead gunman among the Arabs. The Mexican embassy in Rome said one of the Mexicans killed was its military attaché, General Donato Miranda Acosta.

Official sources said hotel receipts found on the gunman after the airport battles showed they had been staying in Rome over the last few days.

Police said they found a bag containing 11 unexploded hand grenades which they described as

(Continued on page 4)

Jordan condemns attacks in Rome and Vienna as terrorism

AMMAN (J.T.) — Jordan has strongly condemned Friday's twin attacks at Rome and Vienna airports as terrorist actions and described the assaults, which killed 17 people and injured over 100, as crimes against humanity.

"Jordan strongly condemns these terrorist actions, which were aimed at civilian airports and claimed civilian lives," said Information Minister Mohammad Al Khatib in a statement carried by the Jordanian News Agency, Petra.

Mr. Khatib said Jordan's condemnation of the attacks stems from its firm stand against

and denunciation of international terrorism regardless of the source of such acts.

"Jordan considers the attacks as a shame and crime against humanity," the minister said.

He called on the Italian and Austrian authorities to punish those who carried out the attacks.

The Arab and international communities will also condemn the terrorist attacks carried out in Rome and Vienna, the minister said.



King to visit Syria on Monday

By a Jordan Times Staff Writer

AMMAN — His Majesty King Hussein will visit Syria on Monday at the invitation of Syrian President Hafez Al Assad, the Jordanian News Agency, Petra, said Friday.

Petra, quoting a spokesman for the Royal Palace, said the date for the visit was agreed upon during a telephone contact between the King and President Assad Friday evening.

Earlier in the day, Petra said the King was expected to begin the visit on Saturday but later reported the revised date. It was believed that the delay in the King's visit was prompted by the pre-occupation of the Syrian leadership with arranging the signing ceremony of a historic accord among Lebanon's three major militias.

The accord, which is considered as a landmark in Lebanon's 10-year-old strife-torn history, was finalised on Thursday after months of painstaking negotiations. It is expected to be signed on Saturday or Sunday. Syria has issued invitations to all senior Lebanese politicians to attend the signing ceremony.

The planned Damascus summit follows four meetings between Prime Minister Rifai and his Syrian counterpart Abdul Raouf Al Kasbi since September. Two of the meetings were held in Saudi Arabia under the auspices of an Arab League reconciliation committee charged with settling Syria's differences with Jordan and Iraq. Mr. Rifai visited Damascus in November and Dr. Kasbi returned the visit earlier this month.

The Rifai-Kasbi meetings produced joint Jordanian-Syrian communiqués calling for an international conference on the Middle East to work out a settlement to the Palestinian problem and rejecting all partial or unilateral solutions to the Arab-Israeli conflict. The communiqués also ruled out direct talks with Israel.

Diplomats quoted by Reuters said on Friday they expected President Assad to return the King's visit early in 1986.

Gorbachev urges solution to regional conflicts in '86

MOSCOW (R) — Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev on Friday called for a political solution to regional conflicts and urged the United States to help make 1986 a more peaceful year by joining Moscow's unilateral nuclear test ban.

Mr. Gorbachev, speaking to ambassadors at a special year-end Kremlin reception, said his November summit with President Ronald Reagan had helped improve the international climate, but that much had to be done to reduce the threat of nuclear war.

"There have also emerged certain points of convergence, or rather potential convergence, on problems covered by talks on nuclear and space arms. How things will work out there depends first of all on how the accord reached at the summit meeting in Geneva will flesh up in practice," he said.

He said the Soviet Union was "firmly set on seeing essential progress in 1986 in the cause of a political settlement in the Middle East, Central America, around Afghanistan, in southern Africa and in the Gulf."

Mr. Gorbachev's speech, reported by the state news agency TASS, made no further mention of Afghanistan.

Syria accuses Israel of escalating tension

DAMASCUS (Agencies) — Syria accused Israel on Friday of deliberately escalating tension over Lebanon and declared it would "invoke the right of self-defence to safeguard its security and that of its armed forces" in Lebanon.

The Syrian media charged Israel was setting the stage for an attack against the Syrian army and trying to sabotage Syria's efforts to end Lebanon's civil war.

The editorial trade followed a note Syria lodged with the United Nations, accusing Israel of escalating Middle East tensions and saying it was determined "to invoke its right of self-defence to safeguard its security and that of its armed forces."

But there was no direct Syrian comment on Israeli Prime Minister Shimon Peres' charge that Syria has moved ground-to-air missile batteries back to East Lebanon's Bekaa Valley.

Tension between Israel and Syria rose sharply last week, when Israel charged that Syria deployed Soviet-supplied high-altitude SA-2 missiles along its border with Lebanon that could fire deep into Israeli airspace.

Peres on Thursday told Israeli newspaper editors that Syria had also reintroduced anti-aircraft missile batteries into the Bekaa. Israel Radio quoted an unnamed senior political source as warning on Friday that the Jewish state will not tolerate restrictions on its air patrols over Lebanon.

Military sources in Tel Aviv, who spoke to the AP on condition of anonymity, said the batteries stationed in the Bekaa were SA-6 and SA-8 missiles deployed on mobile launchers for use against low-flying aircraft. SA-2 missiles are used against high-flying jets.

Israeli Defence Minister Yitzhak Rabin said Israel would continue military reconnaissance flights over Lebanon despite the Syrian buildup.

Rabin told reporters that the buildup "carries the potential for escalation" and added: "Israel reserves for itself the

Lebanon militia leaders prepare to sign peace pact in Damascus

BEIRUT (Agencies) — Lebanese militia leaders and Syrian mediators on Friday prepared to sign a peace pact formally ending nearly 11 years of a civil war that has killed at least 100,000 people and caused up to 20 billion dollars of damage.

Beirut Radio said security arrangements were being readied for the trip by Lebanese militia leaders to the signing ceremony in Damascus, probably before the year's end.

The Voice of Lebanon radio station said Syrian President Hafez Al Assad's government had set a date for the signing ceremony that will be announced when security arrangements are completed.

A final draft of the accord was initiated in Damascus on Thursday by senior negotiators, the Progressive Socialist Party (PSP), the Shiite Amal movement and the rightist "Lebanese Forces".

Mr. Berri left for Damascus to sign the accord with other militia chiefs to end hostilities and introduce wide-ranging political reforms, his office said.

There was no immediate indication Mr. Jumblatt and Dr. Hobeika were to follow Mr. Berri to Syria.

"It's time for congratulations," Mr. Jumblatt said after talks on the accord with Prime Minister Rashid Karami. He did not elaborate.

With hopes growing in Beirut for an accord before the new year, Syria's press declared the pact would strike at what it called Israeli designs to partition Lebanon.

The Tishrin newspaper warned Israel, whose troops patrol a South Lebanese border strip, to withdraw its forces unconditionally "and keep its hands off Lebanon."

Two top rightist politicians, former presidents Camille Chamoun and Suleiman Franjeh, have come out openly against the new pact. They rejected political reforms worked out in the accord to give Muslims an equal share of power with the Christians.

The National Liberal Party of Finance Minister Chamoun joined President Amin Gemayel's Falange Party in attacking the militia peace initiative, dubbing their accord "incomplete and unbalanced."

A party statement said the pact would transfer the president's powers to the Sunni-held office of prime minister.

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Bid to kill PLO envoy thwarted in Cyprus

NICOSIA (AP) — An attempt to assassinate the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) representative in Cyprus by wiring his automobile with explosives was foiled during the night, the PLO and Cyprus police reported on Friday.

Both the PLO press officer and a police spokesman said three men who were trying to plant the explosives ran off after firing three shots at a Palestinian bodyguard who surprised them.

The PLO press officer, who wished to be identified only as "Fayez," said the incident developed at 11 p.m. Thursday night outside the home of Talal Abu Gazeleh, the official representative of the PLO in Cyprus.

Police spokesman Stavros Georgiades said the police arrived on the scene after being summoned by the PLO representative.

An anonymous telephone caller told a Western news agency office here Friday morning that a unit of "the Eagles of the Revolution" had "carried out a death penalty of Talal Abu Gazeleh, the representative of the reactionary Palestinian right wing in Cyprus."

Mali had not confirmed the Libyan-arranged ceasefire, which was announced over Burkina Faso state radio late Thursday.

The two West African countries said the conflict began Christmas day in a border area which has been subject of a long dispute.

Both countries have issued a series of conflicting claims. Each has claimed victory and denied

starting the conflict.

There was no way independently to confirm the reports, which spoke of a total of about 35 soldiers and four civilians killed on both sides.

Various African countries, including Libya, as well as France and the United Nations all have urged the two parties to settle their differences peacefully.

The dispute centers on an area of about 160 kilometres which is supposedly rich in minerals and natural gas.

The agreement to stop hostilities was announced by Libyan Foreign Secretary Ali Abdul Salam Al Tureiki in the Burkina capital Ouagadougou after he had met the country's radical leader, Captain Thomas Sankara.

But Mali did not confirm the agreement.

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Home news

Hamzeh tours Balqa governorate

AMMAN (Petra) — Health Minister Zaid Hamzeh inspected health centres in Balqa Governorate on Thursday and met with Balqa Governor Mijhem Al Khreisha. The minister said at the meeting that the Health Ministry seeks to extend comprehensive health services to all regions of the country.

After reviewing the health situation in Balqa region with Mr. Khreisha, Dr. Hamzeh announced that his ministry has decided to transform the Maadi health centre into a comprehensive health centre to be supplied with specialists and other necessary staff to enable it to offer better medical services to the local population.

Later, the minister held a meeting with doctors and specialists at Salt hospital and heard their views and demands. He also made an inspection tour of the hospital's sections and later toured health centres in a number of regions in the Jordan Valley. The minister was accompanied on the tour by Balqa Health Director Dr. Abdul Halim, Hyiasat.



Members of the Upper House of Parliament listen to debate on the 1986 budget during their Thursday session. The budget won unanimous approval

Senate Finance Committee endorses 1986 budget, makes recommendations

Dr. Huthil Al Sulem, rapporteur of the Upper House of Parliament's Finance Committee, presented the recommendations of the Finance Committee to the full House on Thursday. The committee endorsed the government's 1986 budget law and voiced total support for most of the government's budget priorities. Former Prime Minister and Senate member Ahmad Obaidat, however, delivered a speech to the House in which he cast doubt on certain aspects of the government's economic policy as manifested in the 1986 budget.

The Upper House Finance Committee concluded its deliberations on the 1986 draft budget law and on Thursday endorsed the budget, giving its complete support to government policies of strengthening the Jordanian Armed Forces and the People's Army, supporting the steadfastness of the Palestinian people living in the occupied Arab territories, increasing public services, and laying the foundations for a comprehensive pan-Arab economic unity and cooperation.

The committee's suggestions, which were delivered to the full House by rapporteur Dr. Khalil Al Salem, also welcomed the new and positive aspects of the 1986 budget law which include: establishing a national fund for helping the poor, accepting responsibility for the expenses of street illumination and the interest rates of agricultural credit loans, supplying a separate budget booklet for all government corporations as part of the 1986 budget, and the decision to stop the classification of loans as revenues.

The committee recommended that the House support the government's policies on increasing the role of Jordan's productive sectors through supporting agriculture, encouraging industry and exports, reviving tourism and increasing local production.

The committee also called on the House to back the government's policy on laying the groundwork for land investment and alleviating all obstacles impeding the large companies and investment projects from adding to the country's revenues and combating infrastructural imbalances.

The Finance Committee called on the government to review all suggestions made by the legislative body on the 1986 draft budget law.

Following are major excerpts from the Finance Committee's call on the senators to support and fully endorse the 1986 draft budget law, as read by Dr. Salem.

The senate totally supports the framework on which Jordan's financial policy was based in general and the 1986 draft budget law in particular, especially in the following areas:

- Allocating adequate financial resources for the Armed Forces, the Public Security Department, the Civil Defence Department and the People's Army, which will allow them to upgrade their efficiency and increase the number of their employees.
- Stressing the widespread of public services throughout Jordan and finding means to ensure equal distribution of the development gains, as well as encouraging popular participation in the drawing up and the execution of Jordan's 1986-1990 development plan.
- Reviving the role of the private sector as an equal partner for the public sector in increasing savings, investments and local revenues.
- Laying the foundations for joint pan-Arab economic cooperation in the form of joint ventures and multi-party ventures and as well as in the implementation of Arab economic principals.
- Maintaining a good reputation for Jordan's loan credibility in all international financial consortiums and financial markets by meeting loan payment needs on time.
- Dr. Salem said that the Finance Committee viewed the government's policies in preparing the 1986 draft budget law and earmarking the various financial funds to support their policies as "very constructive," and therefore the committee urges the

Upper House of Parliament gives unanimous consent to 1986 budget

AMMAN (Petra) — The Upper House of Parliament unanimously endorsed the national budget for 1986 on Thursday during a session attended by Prime Minister Zaid Al Rifai and other cabinet members. The prime minister summarised Thursday's debate over the budget with a speech in which he said the government would seriously consider all recommendations put forward by Parliament.

At the outset of the session two newly appointed members, Radi Al Abdullah and Barjas Al Hadid, were sworn in and rapporteur of the financial committee Dr. Khalil Al Salem read out the committee's report about the national budget. Several other members made speeches during the session, commenting on different aspects of the budget, and the prime minister summed up the debate with a speech in which he stressed the government's keenness on maintaining a democratic course of action between the legislative and executive authorities, and its determination to study all remarks and motions put forward by Parliament.

The following are excerpts from the prime minister's speech at the session:

On behalf of the cabinet and in my name I extend my deepest appreciation and gratitude to the House members, especially the financial committee, which exerted relentless efforts in its study of the budget and in assessing the budget's different articles, in cooperation with the minister of finance and his aides.

The financial committee's report and the speeches of the House members were constructive and reflect their keenness to shoulder responsibility of achieving further progress and prosperity for the country and serving its people.

It is incumbent on us to pay tribute to His Majesty King Hussein, who has never spared any efforts towards strengthening the country's economy and defence. We pledge to work for achieving the same goals and for strengthening the armed forces which serve as a shield, defending the motherland.

Comments on the financial committee's report:

I would like to point out the following in the light of the committee's report:

1- With reference to the committee's recommendation calling on the government to make a reassessment of the House's commitments and recommendations on the budget in the next session, I would like to reaffirm that the government is keen on maintaining strong relations with the legislative authority, based on mutual respect; and in this spirit the government will gather all the decisions and recommendations put forth by the Parliament for a detailed study.

But in this connection I would like to comment on three of the points included in the committee's report:

A- The Pension Fund: I would like to remind the House that JD 45 million has been allocated in the new budget to cover pension and compensation, but this is too big a burden for the Pension Fund to bear, particularly as you know that only 7.5 per cent of the total salaries of civil and military officials is being deducted for the Pension Fund.

The Pension Fund has been entrusted with two important tasks: to pay pensioners and to invest the accumulated deducted sums in fruitful and profitable projects. When the Pension Fund first embarked on its mission it discovered that it required hundreds of millions of dinars to meet its commitments every year. In view of the situation, the government is now seriously considering the creation of a body to be entrusted with defining areas of investment in Jordan and investing savings of the citizens living in Jordan and abroad in these projects. At the same time, the government is seeking to link the government's Civil Service Pension Fund with that of the Social Security Corporation.

B- The public expenditure and its effects on services and development:

It is clear from the budget that a large margin of public expenditure will go to executing infrastructure projects, supporting public services and paying interest on loans. This is important because such expenditure will prepare a solid ground for production later on and improve the atmosphere for investments.

Jordan has gone a long way in developing its public services like education, health, communications, electricity and water resources, and the government is keen on improving the level of these services. In this connection I would like to refer to the government's capital expenditure as being not only directed towards services, but as a participation in and contribution to the country's productive projects which the private sector cannot shoulder alone. Statistical reports indicate that Jordan has achieved an 11 per cent annual rate of national economic growth through its successive development plans over the past years. This is a source of pride for all of us.

C- Effects of the budget on economic activities:

The new budget has two faces, one is represented in the local revenues which absorb part of the available liquidity and foreign financial aid, and the other is represented in expenditure which is largely pumped into national economy. The new budget is by far the largest in the country's history, and is designed to revitalise the various sectors and increase the rate of economic growth.

The government, in its drive to strengthen the national economy, has taken measures to reduce imports and direct investments into local industries which are protected from foreign competition, and towards encouraging exports of locally produced commodities. We will take all necessary measures to reduce extravagant spending, and waste of funds.

The government will improve measures to collect taxes in a bid to cover deficit in the new budget.

2- The government has been keen on granting the private sector a leading and active role in the field of investments and production and also in planning and decision making. For example, the private sector is participating in formulating the different parts of the coming 1986-1990 five-year national development plan and is taking part in drafting a new companies law. In addition, the private sector in Jordan is represented in the higher agricultural, health, and education councils.

In this spirit, the government warmly welcomes the financial committee's proposals for involving the private sector in the 'Royal Commission to develop the

Civil Service in Jordan. The government will therefore include private representation in the committees set up to study the new civil service laws and regulations. The new laws are designed to improve government employees' performance, to improve services to the public, and to regulate the relationship between the private and public sectors.

In reference to the financial committee report I also want to comment on a number of points raised by House member Ahmad Obaidat.

Rate of Economic Growth: The rate of growth as estimated in the new budget is based on certain new economic indicators available to the Central Bank of Jordan and to the official departments.

These include the following:

A- An increase in the value of national products from JD 290 million in 1984 to JD 350 million in 1985.

B- An increase in money transfers to the treasury over the 1984 figures.

C- Stable increases in the Jordanian expatriates' transfers.

D- A stable balance of foreign currency reserves on the same level in 1984 and 1985.

3- Unemployment:

The government is aware of the unemployment problem in Jordan and the possible aggravation of this problem in the future. But the government is not remaining idle and is doing what it can to handle the problem in a number of ways. The Ministry of Labour is taking extra measures to see to it that priority in jobs is given to Jordanians and that no foreigners are allowed to take over jobs that can be handled by Jordanian citizens.

The coming five-year plan aims at creating 100,000 new jobs.

4- Foreign Debt:

The high cost of debt service has come about not because of the loans which the country acquired during 1985, but rather for those loans acquired in previous years. This does not mean that the loans have reached a dangerous limit, but I would rather say that well-planned loans aimed at serving development needs will enhance the economy and increase production and eventually bring in more foreign currency to the treasury for the repayment of loans. Public debt service still constitutes 10 per cent of the budget, the same level as 1984.



Mr. Gurcharan Singh New Indian ambassador assumes post

AMMAN (J.T.) — The newly-appointed Indian Ambassador to Jordan, Mr. Gurcharan Singh, presented a copy of his credentials to Foreign Minister Taher Al Wasri on Thursday.

Mr. Singh, 47, who succeeds Mr. Ramesh Lal Samoshi, is a career diplomat with 21 years of service to the Indian Foreign Ministry. He served as India's high commissioner in Ghana and non-resident ambassador to Togo, Liberia and Burkina Faso before being appointed ambassador to Jordan.

Prior to his service in Ghana, he served in the Indian diplomatic missions in Algiers, Rome and Addis Ababa in various capacities. He also served as under-secretary, deputy secretary and Director of the Indian Ministry of External Affairs.

DLDNA begins celebrations

AMMAN (Petra) — Celebrations began here Thursday to mark National Archives and Documents Week, which runs until the end of this month. Speaking on this occasion, the director general of the Department of Libraries, Documentation and National Archives (DLDNA), Ahmad Sharakas, said that Jordan, represented by the DLDNA and similar institutions, has been keen on celebrating this occasion during the last week of December every year.


This celebration, Dr. Sharakas added, came originally in response to a decision by the general assembly of the International Council On Archives, and was supported by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO).

Highway fatalities mar holiday


KARAK (J.T.) — Five people were killed and six others injured in road accidents along the Aquaba Highway south of Dabab, near Qatraneh Thursday afternoon. A spokesman for the Public Security Department said that in one of these accidents an oil tanker truck driven by a Sudanese national collided with a Jordanian lorry driven by Issa Damsan which resulted in the death of both drivers. The accident also resulted in the collision of a small vehicle with the Jordanian lorry causing the injury of the four occupants of the small car, who were taken to Karak hospital for treatment.

Two other accidents occurred on the same road Thursday evening, causing the death of two people and the injury of four others.

One of the accidents occurred when a driver lost control over his lorry due to a mechanical failure, causing it to overturn, and the other was a collision between a lorry and a small car.



Amman - Jordan



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ARABIC PRESS EDITORIALS

Friday's

Al Ra'i: Lebanon's future

IF the Lebanese militia sign the peace agreement in the coming few days the civil war in Lebanon will actually come to an end, and the signing will be the most important event in Lebanon's history. This civil war which lasted for more than 10 years has brought so many tragedies and sufferings to millions of people inside and outside Lebanon, and opened the door for Israeli aggression and the massing of people on Lebanese territory. The end of the war in Lebanon would deprive Israel of the means of exploiting inter-Arab differences and carrying out plots and to achieve its goals. Peace in Lebanon could usher in the beginning of recovery of the Arab nation, which has lately witnessed intensified efforts to end Arab differences. Once the Lebanese have made peace they can live in harmony and can embark on the task of building their country. Once the Lebanese issue is settled for ever, other Arab countries will be able to devote time and effort to confronting the challenges posed against them by their common enemy. The reconciliation in Lebanon means maintaining the sovereignty and territorial integrity of that country, something detested by Israel which had fought hard to divide Lebanon into mini-states; and it will be a victory for the Arab will.

Al Dustour: Arab's African policies

THE Arabs should not be astonished at the restoration of Israel's relations with African states. They actually bear part of the responsibility for this development. The Arab League and the Organisation of Islamic Conference have both condemned the Ivory Coast's decision to restore relations with Israel, and called for emergency meetings to discuss the issue. But looking back at the past events and developments one can easily discover the reasons behind this uneasy development for the Arabs. Among these reasons was the failure of rich Arab countries to honour their commitment to extend economic aid to poor African nations. Another reason is the continued inter-Arab disputes and disunity which caused the African nations to lose faith in their Arab friends, and also because the African nations are in need of technology which Israel was ready to supply through its western allies. We should also not forget the fact that certain Arab countries have been active in creating dissension among African states, causing a split within the Organisation of African Unity. The Arabs must now embark on serious efforts to abort Israel's aims and thwart its plots in Africa.

Suwt Al Shaab: Practising democracy

THE Upper House of Parliament Thursday endorsed the 1986 national budget and so the budget has become a law. In the debate at the House the Prime Minister made it clear that all the remarks of the House members will be taken into account and will be duly studied by the government. But the debate itself and the government's response to the House members views should be regarded a very democratic perspective, and viewed as a sincere effort on the part of the government to maintain democracy and the rule of the constitution. This is a real source of pride for Jordanians who can have greater confidence in their executive and legislative authorities, and should back their efforts towards more progress and towards more prosperity.

Thursday's

Al Ra'i: Cairo trial

ON Saturday Dec. 28, an Egyptian court was scheduled to issue its verdict at the end of the trial of an Egyptian soldier who had killed several Israelis trying to intrude an area he was guarding in Sinai. The soldier was no doubt executing orders given him by his superiors and it would be a grave blunder by the Egyptian judiciary to sentence or punish the soldier. Suleiman Khater. No one can say that this soldier, who was only obeying orders, deserves punishment for his actions. It is only just that the court should acquit him of the charges of killing the Israelis on purpose. It should also be pointed out that Egypt has referred the soldier to trial under pressure from Israel, which claims that the killing had political motives. Israel also made it a condition that this trial should take place if the Israelis and the Egyptians are to resume talks over the future of Tabu in Sinai. Egypt should not succumb to pressure of any kind and should not sacrifice any of its soldiers to please Israel and world Zionism. Egyptians do realise that the Israelis, who burnt Al Aqsa Mosque in Jerusalem and committed massacres in Sabra and Shatila refugee camps, are still at large and not a single one of the Zionists, who carried out crimes against the Palestinians or other Arabs, has been punished. All the Arab masses in general and the people of Egypt in particular are watching and waiting in earnest to know the fate of their brother, Suleiman Khater.

Sawt Al Shaab: Israeli aggression

ISRAEL would love to maintain the status quo, the no-peace, no-war situation in the Middle East so that it can easily carry out its expansionist projects. Israel has no doubt found in the Jordanian-Syrian rapprochement a new threat to its plans and its evil plots, and so it raised the question of the Syrian missiles, set up inside Syrian territory to protect Syrian cities. Any close ties between Arab countries is feared by the common enemy and any rapprochement between governments in the region is interpreted as a sign of hostility towards Zionism. Acting on this assumption, Israel has now created an issue over the presence of the Syrian missiles, claiming that they constitute a threat to Israeli territory. The issue raised against the missiles is a new form of pressure that the Israelis want to exercise on the Arabs to thwart their attempts to come closer together. Jordan and Syria together form one unity in confrontation with the enemy, and they are indeed the nucleus of resistance to Zionist aggression on the Arab nation. We are confident that any rapprochement between the two countries will not be affected in the least by Israel's challenges and the storms it raises here and there to win world support for its claims and its aggression.

South Africa's year was one of bloodshed

By Victor Mallet
Reuters

JOHANNESBURG — South Africans are counting the cost of a year of violence and bloodshed that shook the racially-divided republic as never before.

More than 800 people have died violently this year. The vast majority were blacks, killed in bloody clashes between security forces and rioters or in gruesome attacks by militant township residents on those they see as collaborators with the white government. Whites died in bomb and landmine blasts.

Funeral followed funeral in the black townships, and as the months passed, mourners at the burials became increasingly defiant and open in their support of the African National Congress (ANC) movement which seeks to topple white rule.

It was also a year of reforms to apartheid racial segregation policies — changes hailed by President P.W. Botha as a break with the past, but dismissed by many of the black majority as insignificant tokens.

Botha's National Party government also moved to restrict civil liberties, imposing a state of emergency on parts of the country in July in a vain attempt to stamp out riots.

Thousands of its opponents were detained without trial and dozens were charged with treason.

The government's economic problems multiplied as nervous foreign bankers refused fresh credit without significant political reforms.

South Africa's relations with black neighbours and Western allies deteriorated sharply, undermined by its unwillingness to speed up the dismantling of apartheid, by its cross-border military raids in pursuit of guerrillas and by its continued support of Angolan and Mozambican rebels.

The year began with the first full session of a new parliament, in which Indians and coloureds (people of mixed race) were represented for the first time in the assembly.

But the three groups debated in separate, segregated chambers and the National Party, making use of its own complex new constitution, continued to dominate all important executive bodies. Blacks were excluded altogether.

Botha opened parliament with a speech promising more political say for urban blacks and suggesting that forced removals and influx control laws affecting blacks would be reviewed.

Bishop Desmond Tutu, anti-apartheid campaigner and Nobel Peace Prize winner in 1984, responded to the speech with a view echoed by blacks throughout the year each time Botha addressed the nation.

"We will not be satisfied with the crumbs of concessions the white man throws at us. The country is ours," Tutu said.

Yet many of the reforms announced by the government in 1985 did chip away at the cornerstones of apartheid.

Forced removals of blacks from "white" areas were officially suspended. Laws barring sex and marriage between races were repealed, although the retention of racially segregated residential areas and schools posed problems for mixed couples.

A law barring multiracial political parties was repealed and Botha promised to return citizenship to millions of blacks deprived of their South African nationality by the creation of autonomous tribal homelands.

Perhaps most significant of all, the president's council, an advisory body dominated by the National Party, recommended the complete scrapping of the pass laws, the influx control measures so bitterly hated by blacks. At present the laws remain, but Botha could announce changes in 1986.

In February, Botha offered to release jailed ANC leader Nelson Mandela provided he renounced violence. Mandela refused and made counter-demands of his own, including the dismantling of apartheid and an end to violence by the state.

Mandela's wife Winnie repeatedly defied a government ban-

ning order, addressing crowds and living in Soweto, the giant Johannesburg black township. She was arrested last Sunday for standing in Soweto and will face charges in the new year.

Rioting in black townships, which erupted on a large scale in September 1984, overshadowed other news events. The riots were accompanied by unrest in schools, strikes and black consumer boycotts of white shops.

Eighteen people were killed in three days of violence in the crossroads shanty town near Cape Town in February when the government threatened to uproot all the inhabitants and move them to a new township. Pretoria backed down and said it would redevellop the area.

On March 21, the 25th anniversary of a massacre in Sharpeville when police killed 69 blacks protesting against the pass laws, police in Langa in the eastern Cape killed 20 marchers going to a funeral, prompting an international outcry.

Troops became increasingly involved in helping police to combat the unrest and are now a routine feature of life in black townships. Rioting spread to previously-immune white areas, including the centres of Johannesburg and Cape Town.

Rioting spread to most parts of the country and in July Botha declared a state of emergency in the worst hit regions. Over 7,000 people were held without trial under emergency powers, although the majority were later freed.

News coverage, particularly by foreign television stations which the government accused of inciting unrest, was restricted.

However, the bloodshed continued, with major outbreaks of violence in Cape Town and Durban.

In a widely-awaited speech in Durban in August, Botha dashed foreign hopes of significant reforms to apartheid.

He said he was committed to

change but added: "I am not prepared to lead white South Africans and other minority groups on a road to abdication and suicide."

The rand immediately plunged on foreign exchange markets and in September Pretoria was forced to freeze repayment of part of its 24-billion-dollar foreign debt when overseas banks cut credit

lines. On the labour front, black mineworkers flexed their muscles with a largely unsuccessful wage strike on gold and coal mines while at the end of November mainly-black unions launched a powerful new federation, the Congress of South African Trade Unions, which pledged to politically challenge the government.

ANC increasing pressure

By Arik Bachar
Reuters

JOHANNESBURG — Black nationalist guerrillas appear to be making good their vow to exact a heavier price from South African whites for holding on to minority power.

A spate of guerrilla attacks attributed to the African National Congress (ANC) has claimed unprecedented number of white casualties — six were killed in a landmine blast on December 15 and six died in a bomb explosion at a holiday resort near Durban on Dec. 23.

Political and military experts believe the two incidents and other recent attacks could signal the implementation of a new ANC strategy of shifting assaults from military to civilian targets.

The ANC, outlawed by Pretoria in 1960 after turning to armed struggle against white domination, decided at a high-level meeting in June to intensify its war. It has since threatened to attack segregated cities reserved for whites.

Senior political scientist professor Robert Schrire of Cape Town University told Reuters an escalation in ANC tactics was unavoidable. "In a fundamental struggle for power, everything escalates the longer there is intransigence on one or both sides."

Military experts say the increase in guerrilla attacks could be linked to an apparent decline in black township violence which has claimed more than 1,000 lives since February last year.

Schrire agreed: "The ANC knows that from its point of view it is necessary to keep up the im-

plus now that urban turmoil is subsiding."

The ANC emerged from its June conference apparently determined to seek tangible results in its long, and so far unsuccessful, bid to achieve black majority rule.

"For a good 25 years the ANC tactics have been limited in terms of armed force because of limited capability but also because of a deliberate policy," Schrire said.

"Now, with a younger generation, they will view the results as having been marginal and will see a need to escalate the fighting."

Until its revised strategy was adopted, the ANC deliberately avoided attacking targets other than military and government installations. The civilians killed were normally in the vicinity of such bombings.

Most experts say whites can expect increased guerrilla warfare in their midst, but the effect on the ruling minority is likely to be the opposite of what the ANC has in mind.

Dutch-descended Afrikaners, in the three centuries since they first arrived in the sub-continent, have shown a tendency to grow more intransigent in the face of threats.

Although the number of people leaving the country has increased as racial conflict grew in recent months, the majority of white show no signs of relinquishing political power and the privileged life that goes with it.

"The tragedy is that at this stage, the gap between white capability to retain power and black aspirations is too great," Schrire said.

17 killed in El Al attacks

(Continued from page 1)

the type as used in an attack on Rome's Cafe de Paris last September in which nearly 40 people were injured.

One of those killed at the airport was Natasha Simpson, 12-year-old daughter of Victor Simpson, a correspondent in Rome of the AP. Her father and younger brother Michael were injured but were not in a critical condition, the AP said.

Italian Defence Minister Giovanni Spadolini linked the attack with one carried out almost simultaneously at Vienna airport. "The attack in Vienna at the same time confirms the existence of a plan for terrorist destabilisation of an international character," Mr. Spadolini told reporters.

In the Vienna attack, Austrian police said gunmen hurling grenades and shooting wildly into queues of passengers attacked the El Al counter at Schwechat airport.

They said two men of Arab origin stormed into the crowded area near the El Al check-in desk, rolling grenades along the floor and firing automatic weapons.

The three then shot their way out of the airport building, took a Mercedes car from an airport employee and, after taking the wrong direction on airport approach roads, managed to flee. They threw a hand grenade at a pursuing police car but failed to hit it.

Pursuing police kept firing on the getaway car. On a local road, near Schwadorf, a village some 10 kilometres to the southeast, the three escapees had to leave their vehicle, rendered inoperational by police bullets, police said.

The gunmen attempted to stop two oncoming cars, but police were nearby. In another shootout that left one gunman killed, the two others dropped their guns and threw up their arms as a sign of surrender.

As police detained the two men, both suffering gunshot wounds, they found that one of them still clutched a hand grenade. It was immediately defused.

Earlier reports spoke of a fourth gunman being shot in the airport building, but police did not confirm this.

The attack took place just before 9 a.m., as passengers were checking in for El Al flight 364 to Tel Aviv.

Dozens of people were also queuing at a nearby desk for a holiday charter flight to Heraklion in Greece.

In Washington, President Reagan, condemning what he called the "cowardly" twin attacks, urged capture and punishment for the gunmen.

"The United States deeply deplores the attacks," White House spokesman Larry Speakes said. "We think the terrorists should be apprehended and punished."

He added that "we deplore

them and condemn them as cowardly acts."

The U.S. government warned major airports and airlines in the Mediterranean area and the Middle East last month to be alert for possible attacks, another spokesman said on Friday.

"We did issue an alert or an advisory last November but I can't go into the specifics," Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) spokesman Fred Farrar said. "We had information that indicated that they should be on the alert."

Farrar said he did not know enough about the Rome and Vienna attacks to say whether they fit the description of violence that the FAA feared when it issued the alert.

Israeli Defence Minister Yitzhak Rabin blamed Palestinian organisations for the attacks.

"The attacks should remind anyone who has either forgotten or ignored the fact that the Palestinian organisations have not quit and are trying to reach us and harm us wherever they can," Rabin told an Israeli economic club in Tel Aviv.

One government official, demanding anonymity, said Israel had "grounds to believe the PLO was behind the attacks."

In statements issued in Amman and Tunis the PLO said it was in no way involved in the attacks.

In Tunis a spokesman for the PLO's Political Department told Reuters the organisation abided wholly by Chairman Yasser Arafat's declaration last month condemning attacks outside Arab territories occupied by Israel.

The spokesman said that Israel tried to implicate the PLO in such attacks.

"The PLO would like to draw the attention of world opinion and all parties to the Middle East conflict to the dangers of Israeli declarations which try to implicate the PLO in such attacks," the spokesman said.

He said that Italy and Austria were friendly countries.

PLO spokesmen in Rome and Vienna earlier condemned the assaults and said the organisation regretted that it could harm its relations with Italy and Austria.

Egypt condemned the attacks and said finding a solution to the Middle East problem could help end terrorism.

Foreign Minister Esmat Abdul Meguid said Egypt "strongly condemns all acts of terrorism regardless of the culprits."

"An immediate end to terrorism can be achieved through final solutions to political issues, especially the Middle East problem," he told reporters.

Egypt's Minister of State for Foreign Affairs Boutros Ghali also condemned the attacks, saying Egypt considered them "a serious obstacle to achieving a comprehensive (Middle East) peace, which is a principal goal of Egyptian diplomacy."

European Community entry charts new course for Portugal

By Pascal Fletcher
Reuters

LISBON — Portugal will enter the European Community on January 1 with the same mixture of hope and apprehension its navigators must have felt when they began their voyages of discovery over five centuries ago.

Portuguese leaders see the accession, agreed in March after eight years of negotiations, as confirming Portugal's natural place in Europe after the dismantling of its empire which once embraced Africa, South America and Asia.

Hailed as the most important national event since the 1974 revolution that toppled a right-wing dictatorship, EC entry is also viewed as a key opportunity for social and economic progress in a country rated the poorest in Western Europe.

But the euphoria that surrounded the successful end to the entry talks achieved by the previous Socialist-led administration of ex-premier Mario Soares has now subsided.

The New Social Democratic (PSD) government is confident EC membership can end Portugal's position as Europe's poor relation. But this confidence is tempered by the knowledge that its underdeveloped economy must first be whipped into shape.

"Accession to the EC will be of little use if we are not capable of adapting our financial, economic and administrative structures to take advantage of the potential benefits," Prime Minister Amal Cavaco Silva said recently.

Portugal joins the EC with Spain when its economy is only just showing signs of emerging from a two-year recession made

more severe by austerity measures introduced to cut a bloated current account deficit and control the foreign debt.

But many businessmen and farmers see the threat of continuing political instability as the biggest obstacle to effective reforms which they say are needed for Portugal to reap the full benefits of EC membership.

"I'm not optimistic ... I would be if there was political stability," Raul Rosado Fernandes, president of the Portuguese Farmers' Confederation (CAP), told Reuters.

The new government, for not after October's general election, is the 16th since the 1974 revolution. It does not have a parliamentary majority and some political commentators predict it will become increasingly vulnerable as tensions mount before presidential elections, due on January 26.

Cavaco Silva says he believes accession to a trading and political bloc of democratic states will strengthen Portugal's own young democracy and act as a catalyst for economic modernization.

Portugal's leaders also say the membership of their country, a founder and staunch supporter of the NATO alliance, will reinforce the security of the community's southwest flank.

EC membership is broadly backed by all Portugal's main parties, except the Communist Party (PCP).

"EC entry will not mean the much-trumpeted modernisation ... it will mean the ruin of vast sectors of the economy ... and a serious threat to our national sovereignty," the PCP said in its manifesto for the October general election.

Portugal's agriculture is the least productive in Western Europe. It employs more than 20 per cent of the workforce but contributes only 7.6 per cent of gross domestic product (GDP).

Over 60 per cent of the country's food needs are imported. Businessmen say Portugal's industry, heavily dependent on imported technology, energy and raw materials, will also need major investment to compete in the community.

"We frequently look on the community as a charity group and tend to forget that it is a union of competitors," Fritz Hauser of the Confederation of Portuguese Industry (CIP) told Reuters.

He added: "We must be modest and realistic ... Europe has not-

hing to fear from Portugal's economic capacity." Portuguese exporters should seek to exploit existing strengths in specific markets, notably textiles, footwear and cork products, he said.

Costa Martins said integration was also expected to bring a major increase in foreign investment and this would galvanise national industry. Access to joint European technology projects would also be a bonus, he said.

Rosado Fernandes said Portuguese fruit, vegetables and wines could be competitive in the European market.

Vulnerable sectors include shipbuilding, food processing and fisheries in which Hauser and Rosado Fernandes said neighbouring Spain would be a major competitor. Portuguese wine and olive oil will also face heavy competition from Spain.

But business and farming organisations have welcomed early moves by the new government to boost investment and create new jobs by cutting interest rates and promising lower taxes.

Government officials also believe EC membership will usher in a new era in relations with Spain. They hope a trade and fishing accord signed in April will head off further bilateral disputes that have in the past soured a relationship characterised by coolness.

In foreign policy, Portugal's leaders say EC membership will benefit rather than restrict relations with its former colonies in Africa and other nations.

Access to EC funds and technology, combined with Portugal's overseas experience, should make the country an ideal intermediary for cooperation with the Third World, they say.

Bangladesh: Despite progress, promises, poverty remains, population soars

By Victoria Graham
The Associated Press

DHAKA, Bangladesh — President Hussein Muhammad Ershad says that Bangladesh has made great strides in 14 years since achieving independence and that a nation once known for subsistence living has become a "heaven" despite poverty.

But amid signs of progress, much wrenching poverty remains, aggravated by staggering population growth.

In Kachua village, 300 kilometres southwest of Dhaka, landless peasant Arun Das, 36, uses his three children to plough a tiny sharecropper's rice paddy. He is too poor to buy a buffalo.

Three-year-old Muhadev sits naked on the wooden plough to

give it a little weight. His elder sister Chabirani, 10, and brother Shankar, 8, drag it with ropes through the mud.

"I always do it this way. I cannot afford a buffalo," says Das, who does odd jobs and earns the equivalent of a dollar or 1.50 dollars a day — on good days — to feed his family of five.

According to the government, the World Bank and the U.S. State Department, Bangladesh, once dubbed unfairly but memorably a "basketcase" (hopeless), has made significant progress in recent years in most areas.

But the facts about Bangladesh, still virtually rock bottom by most social and economic measures in the Third World, are disturbing.

A poignant example: the tiny

Ganges delta nation must import boulders to build up the shoreline and keep it from being washed away into the Bay of Bengal.

Despite such projects, in May 11, 600 people were killed and washed away, and several hundred thousand left homeless by a cyclone and tidal wave. Bangladesh has only one radar station and most victims never received any warning.

With 100 million people (officially 110 million), Bangladesh is about the eighth most populous country in the world; its people squeezed into a 143,998-square kilometre plane.

It is the world's most densely populated agricultural nation, 85 per cent of its people living in rural areas and half of them landless. At

least 86 per cent of the people live below the World Bank's poverty line.

The average per capita income is among the world's lowest at \$140 a year. But most people earn far less than that, have no actual cash income and simply barter and subsist.

Population has almost doubled in the 14 years since independence, when it stood at about 70 million. It is increasing by about 2.5 per cent a year, down from 3.1 per cent in the recent past, but still undercutting small economic gains.

About half the population is under 14. At least 1,300 babies are born every day, infant mortality is 132 per 1,000, life expectancy 50 years.



Talking straight
Marwan Muasher

NINETEEN EIGHTY FIVE, perhaps just as any other year, has been eventful. At the end of each year one reads reviews in newspapers, or sees programmes on TV, highlighting the main events of the past year. Each year everybody wonders at all the various events that took place.

And, yet, much of what is different is really just the same. Wars still take place, famous and not-so-famous people still die, governments resign, coups d'etat occur, hurricanes still strike, airplanes still crash, and yes, people still win football games, just as others lose them. If one really looks at things more closely, one finds 1985 was no different than any other year. 1986 will also be the same. Unless we get a visit by some martians, or unless we start a nuclear war, 1986 will again be eventful, but terribly redundant.

Still, people like to reflect on the past year events when the new year comes upon them. They tend to philosophise, ask questions, analyse, hope for the better and make wishes they often know will not come true. It is all part of the new year's ritual that includes celebrations, evaluations and hopes. It is normally fun to hope for changes. It is fun to dream that changes are actually possible, and in the one-in-a-million shot where a wish actually comes true, it is ecstasy.

And while the new year gives us the chance to hope for better things, it also reminds us that we were getting older. Something that I guess depends on one's mood on the new year's eve. It provides feelings that are a mixture of hope and despair, expectation and depression, joy and sorrow.

For those without their loved ones, new year's eve can be a very lonely occasion. New year's eve is definitely not a night to be spent alone. If anything, it should be shared with friends. The bond of friendship that ties people together is somehow always stronger at this time of the year. Either that, or I am feeling mushy while writing this article.

I feel we often expect too much from the new year. We tend to want to assess all our past achievements and shortcomings in one night. We want to plan for everything that lies ahead, but we usually end up doing nothing. We want to have fun on new year's eve that I often feel is forced. We blow whistles and wear hats and join hands and sing. And unless we are happy to start with, those added accessories rarely succeed in giving us a good time.

Not that I will stop blowing whistles. I, you see, am always hopeful.

I will not talk today of the wars, the deaths, the wins and the defeats of mankind. I'll leave that for others to reflect on. I have nothing to say about an earthquake killing a thousand lives or the stampeding of spectators in a football stadium. Such is the planet we live on, and such are the people. There is little point in trying to derive any wisdoms from such acts.

And, if people choose to write about the Iran-Iraq war, the Reagan-Gorbachev summit, the civil war in Lebanon, or even the passing away of Orson Wells, I choose to lightly reflect on what has happened here, to the regular folks living in good old Amman. A meeting of Rajiv Gandhi and Zia Ul Haq might make a billion

people breathe easier in India and Pakistan, but I worry about the small things that happen to us here, giving us a breath of fresh air at times, and choking us at others.

One can always start on the personal level, and even though I have had an eventful year, I'll share one wish with you though, I hope whatever I do on the new year's eve will be better than what happened to me during all those new year parties I went to before and did not enjoy.

On a more joyful note, the Jordan Times celebrated its tenth anniversary on October 26 of this year. That was nice, considering all the parties we went to. It made me realise the Jordan Times staff are also human beings who can dance, eat and have fun.

We've had three different ministers of information during

this past year, with three distinct styles. Talk about adjusting to stress.

We've also had some changes in our staff. Issam Al-Tall and Samir Jouanah left the paper, only for Abdullah Hassanat, Bill — and Najwa Najjar to join. I am happy (I guess) to report that George is still at the helm, and that I am beginning my fourth year of Talking Straight, despite the fact that I was silenced at times.

Talking about new faces, we've also had some of them in parliament. Old faces elected new faces replacing old ones. I cannot hide my intrigue with our parliamentarians who often argue fiercely over laws presented to them, only to pass them later unanimously. At least I am happy to see our love for arguing extends to our parliament.

Amman is changing as well. We'll have to live with all these detours for two years, or so they say. New restaurants are springing up, other companies are declaring bankruptcy, and people still complain as usual.

I try to think of all these events that took place in town this past year. So many things, political and social, occurred, and yet, as the song goes, after changes upon changes we are more or less the same.

Well, there is my wisdom for the new year. As you see, it is not much. Perhaps there is no point in selecting a milestone and stopping to assess one's life. And then again, we sometimes need moments where we look forward. If there has to be a time for these moments, why not on the new year. A little twinkle of the heart never hurts, I suppose. See you next year.

Channel 6 preview

Out with the old, in with the new

By J.H. Boteler

THERE is a song in the current top twenty on Radio Jordan in which some gormless twit warbles a refrain, the gist of which goes something like: "Why can't we have Christmas every day? Wouldn't that be a lovely way to spend the year?" Only if one was a dedicated masochist; strewth, what an appalling concept. Even Dante, concocting his various levels of the Inferno, stopped short of such horrors. Even here at JTV, normally such a staid and quiet, indeed civilised, establishment, rabid confusion reigns. Matters aren't helped by the fact that a new programme cycle looms ominously over the skyline. Some great programmes can be copied, (as well as some particularly grisly ones, but we need not talk about them right away), but matters are not helped by the fact that several of the old cycle's programmes still have a few episodes to go before they finish their run. But I will bravely try to make some sense out of the chaos, and if at points I am more than usually short on information, blame it on Halley's Comet.

Comedies

Tonight continues with *It's Your Move*. I don't know what this episode is about, but at least last week Matthew Barton showed signs of being redeemable, when he nobly threw away the secret tapes he had made of Julie's pyromania party. To be honest, I am pretty much in the dark about the actual contents of nearly all this week's programmes, but one sure point in a changing world is *Chance In A Million*, Sunday's comedy. (Now you know the state of things, when the particular style of anarchy brought about by Tom can be described as stability). This week's episode is called "Winning Streak," and is all about Tom's amazing luck in any and every competition that he enters, and even some that he doesn't. A premature arrival of the new cycle

Documentaries and detectives

Antonia still has a few more weeks to go, and tonight's episode is called "Transports Of Delight." The car has been a source of inspiration to artists, writers, musicians and film-makers since its earliest days, and this programme explores the role of the car in popular culture. No other medium has influenced people's attitude towards the car than the cinema, and this episode looks at those films in which the entire storyline was built around the car. (The Yellow Rolls Royce, The Great Race, Genevieve, etc.) to more modern examples such as Mad Max. Also investigated are the thousands of songs spawned by the industry, immense private collections of "motoring memorabilia" and some lunatic who has covered his car in living grass! Tomorrow continues with *Vista*, and an episode entitled "Fuel For The Future," which seems fairly self-explanatory. It examines alternative energy sources such as the sun, wind, water and, would you believe it, garbage. On Monday you can watch the second and final part of the *David Lean* profile, whilst on Wednesday Con-

nections wings in yet again with "Eat, Drink, and be Merry." (I know, I know, this should have been last week, but a last-minute decision substituted "Yes, Minister" instead. Since this is the season of goodwill to all men and all that, I will say nothing!). So much

Tonight

It's Your Move 8.30
Antonia 9.00

Varieties 9.30
Feature Film:
The Boy in the Plastic Bubble 10.20

Sunday

Chance In A Million 8.30
Vista 9.10
Love Boat 10.20

Monday

Bottle Boys 8.30
David Lean Profile
(Part Two) 9.10
Murder, She Wrote 10.20

Tuesday

That's My Boy 8.30
New Cycle Promotions 9.10
Feature Film:
Falcon Crest 10.20

Wednesday

Three's Company 8.30
Connections 9.10
Falcon Crest 10.20

Thursday

Emergency Room 8.30
Return to Eden 9.10
Varieties 9.30
Feature Film 10.20

Friday

Sara 8.30
The Far Pavilions 9.10
The Brief 10.20

for documentaries.

Now, for all you detective fans, I have some rather depressing news... *Murder, She Wrote*, and that, my hearties, is your lot. At least for this week anyway. A bit rough, starting off 1986 with a nostalgic yearning for all the *Bergeres*, *Miss Marples*, *Magnus* et al of yesteryear. But then again, all good things must come to an end, and you must admit that you had it pretty good in 1985, two whole series of P.D. James for heaven's sake, to say nothing of *Widows* or even *Remington Steele*; also, it is only fair to remember that not everyone enjoys stabbings, shootings, and hunt instruments, and they are about to get their revenge, in the form of a massive overdose of:

Drama

Tomorrow we can all bid a fond farewell to *Love Boat*, sailing off into the sunset for at least the foreseeable future. Whether this is actually drama is a moot point but honestly, you ain't seen nothing yet. Apart from the imminent arrival of *Dallas* (yes, you heard me right: *Dallas*), this Wednesday starts a new series of *Falcon Crest*. I must admit that this is a programme that I studiously avoided in my youth, but it's a sort of *Dallas* look-alike, with the same sort of characters. Ideological hit-and-run, and twanging nasal accents. As for Thursday, well then you can thrill to an Antipodean cousin of J.R. and gang, with *Return To Eden*. Just listen to the blurb: "Return to the power, the passion... the glamour... return to romance, adventure, excitement... Return to the story of love, betrayal, and revenge... Return to Eden... the story continues." Gosh, golly, I simply can't wait. But wait, there is more: "Return To Eden is the saga of the Harper family and their battle to preserve their empire against those who wish to destroy them. Stephanie Harper, now the richest, most powerful woman in

Australia, is suddenly threatened by dark forces from her past and must fight to save all she has struggled for. Return To Eden excites with the intrigue of international high finance and sizzles with the intensity of a love that will overcome all obstacles." You have been warned.

As if all that was not enough, there is also *The Far Pavilions* on Friday. At least this has a fairly promising cast. Ben Cross, (Chariots of Fire), Omar Sharif, Sir John Gielgud, Christopher Lee, and Rossano Brazzi. It is also adapted from the very successful and popular novel by M.M. Kaye. But listen to the blurb again: "It is a passionate and haunting love story set in the India of the British Raj against the spectacular and epic sweep of battle, treachery and intrigue." I am beginning to get the very nasty impression that we are in for a particularly brutal winter, and that JTV is trying to comfort us with all these steamy, passionate series.

Which only leaves me to tell you about *The Brief*, a thirteen part series for Fridays. It is a powerful adult drama about a globe-trotting international trial lawyer

at the crossroads of his life, torn in a complicated love quadrangle. It is a story of today, about today's people facing today's problems of shattered marriages, divided loyalties, sexual ambivalence and families under threat. (Oo second thoughts, probably the worst winter in living memory!). The story lines are played out against the authentic background of today's political and social tensions in Europe, the polarisation of East and West, the eruption of the Green (ecology) movement and the peace protestors. Episode one starts with the hero, Lucas Heller, has to take over a case in West Germany because his colleague who was handling the case has suffered a heart-attack. The case involves the defence of an army corporal, facing court-martial after going missing for three months and then being arrested in East Germany.

Feature films

Your usual three this week, but I only know about tonight's, which stars John Travolta, as *The Boy in the Plastic Bubble*. If my memory serves me well, it's one of those



Ray Lonnen in the role of Lucas Heller in the brief, every Friday at 10:20

cheery tales about a young man who is susceptible to any and all germs and in order to stay alive has to live in the germ-free atmosphere of a polythene bag, which is pretty depressing, but at least he won't be able to dance. Tuesday and Thursday's offerings are mysteries.

So, that's it for now folks: at present, a fairly confused state of affairs, but I fondly believe that by next Saturday some sense and order will prevail, and that the new cycle can be examined with all the strength and hope that every new year brings. May yours be a very happy one.

Arafat due in Amman soon, may travel to Egypt

(Continued from page 1)
achieve recognition of the PLO, instead of putting pressure on it?" he added.

Peres: 'Air of peace'

Israeli Prime Minister Shimon Peres said Thursday a new air of peace was blowing in the Middle East. Peres, was speaking at a reception in Bethlehem as thousands of Christians gathered in Manger Square to sing carols and celebrate midnight mass at St. Catherine's Basilica next to the Church of the Nativity, said:

"There is an air of peace now blowing in our region, let us learn to breathe it properly."

The annual party, given by Bethlehem Mayor Elias Freij, also attended by Israeli Defence Minister Yitzhak Rabin and two other cabinet officials, provided a rare chance for Israeli and West Bank leaders to talk informally.

Arafat condemns killing

Mr. Arafat, in a message published on Thursday strongly condemned the killing of a Palestinian journalist in the occupied West Bank last week.

In a message he sent to U.N. Secretary-General Javier Perez de Cuellar, Mr. Arafat described the murder of Hassan Abdul Halim as latest example of Israel's "organised terrorist campaign to oppress the Palestinian people."

The PLO leader called on the international community to "condemn this crime and work towards protecting the Palestinians from the Zionist terrorist campaign."

The last investigative story of the Palestinian journalist whose body was found last week was pub-

lished on Friday by his newspaper with a note in which he asked that the article not be signed.

Abdul Halim, 36, of the East Jerusalem daily Al Fajr, was investigating fraudulent land purchases on the Israeli-occupied West Bank and colleagues say he was killed because of his discoveries.

In other developments in the occupied territories, an Israeli spokesman said two Palestinian prisoners were killed by their cellmates in the occupied Gaza Strip because they collaborated with the Israeli authorities.

According to a statement by the prison authority spokesman, the two prisoners were choked to death by some of the 18 other cellmates.

The murdered inmates were identified as Sami Musa Abu Hamed and Zakir Muhammad 'Azal, both 19 years old.

Several resistance attacks against the Israeli authorities in the

occupied territories were reported in the last three days.

A bomb exploded Thursday opposite Tel Aviv's city hall, no one was injured, police said.

Israeli television said the bomb attack was the first for several years in the centre of Tel Aviv.

Police closed off the busy street for 40 minutes, and television said several Arabs working in the area were detained.

A small bomb exploded in a central square of the town of Afula on Wednesday but caused no injuries, Israeli police said.

It was the seventh bomb in recent months in the Galilee town, which was the flashpoint of anti-Arab demonstrations last summer.

The Kuwaiti newspaper Al Anba reported on Thursday that Mr. Arafat has set up a new military wing of his mainline group Fatah, an underground organisation operating against Israeli occupation forces in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip.

Citing an unidentified Fatah official, the paper said the new organisation is called Al Wathiqoon (the Confident Men), and has been using "whatever weapons available to them within the occupied territory."

These, it said, include light arms, explosives and knives.

"The new organisation was created last February, when it blew up the Jerusalem-Herzliya railway," the paper quoted the official as saying.

It said that Mr. Arafat thought of assembling and launching Al Wathiqoon "immediately after the (Palestinians) nuster from Lebanon" in the summer of 1982, when Israel invaded Lebanon.

"Arafat was then bent on seeking means of escalating armed resistance (against Israel) within the occupied territory," the Fatah official told the paper. "The new organisation will be formally launched on Jan. 1, 1986, to mark the 21st anniversary of Fatah."

Syria says Israel escalating tension

(Continued from page 1)

ways, means and time of how to cope with this problem... we continue our flights over Lebanon."

Western diplomats spoke of mounting concern that the missiles would spark a confrontation and said the United States was deeply involved in efforts to defuse the tension.

The Syrian government newspaper Tishrin said on Friday recent Israeli threats "will in no way affect Syria's efforts aimed at achieving reconciliation in Lebanon... reconciliation efforts are escalating, which means that Syria is

indifferent to Israel's threats and provocations."

Al Baath, newspaper of Syria's ruling Arab Socialist Baath Party, said Israel's threats were aimed at creating a crisis in the region "to make easier its strike against Lebanese unity and weaken the Syrian stand."

Israeli Deputy Premier David Levy told reporters Friday that Syria "should not interpret Israeli restraint as weakness." Aides said Foreign Minister Yitzhak Shamir had told a visiting U.S. congressman the missiles posed a "serious problem."

The SA-2s were deployed after

Israel said it shot down two Syrian MiGs on Nov. 19.

Israel contends it must carry out surveillance flights to monitor Palestinian movements in the Syrian-controlled Bekaa Valley. It has depicted the missiles as a challenge to Israel's "freedom" to patrol Lebanese skies.

The latest missile buildup comes against a background of Israeli concern over budget cuts that are weakening Israel's military capability. Rabin told a gathering of war veterans on Thursday the public did not understand how damaging the cuts had been.

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United, Liverpool face awkward away trips

LONDON (R) — English soccer league leaders Manchester United and Liverpool, both of whom can ill-afford any further slip-ups, face hazardous assignments away from home Saturday.

United, four points clear at the top but beaten in their last two outings, play Newcastle while Liverpool have to tackle a Nottingham Forest side which, though infuriatingly inconsistent, remain one of the hardest teams to beat in the First Division.

Liverpool have taken just one point out of a possible nine in their last three games and it was probably a hint of things to come when player-manager Kenny Dalglish came on as substitute seconds after Clive Wilsoo scored

the winner for Manchester City Thursday. Dalglish replaced Paul Walsh and is likely to play from the start at Forest in the hope that his reappearance will coincide with the return to form of Ian Rush whose goal supply has suddenly dried up.

United also slipped Thursday, going down 3-1 at Everton, and manager Ron Atkinson may axe England number two goalkeeper Gary Bailey.

Atkinson, who could not hide his anger after the defeat at Goo-

dison, said: "Everton played well, but we simply did not defend... and I include the goalkeeper in that."

Everton's victory took them to within six points of United and the champions should maintain their recent good run against visiting Sheffield Wednesday.

On paper, Chelsea pose the biggest threat to the leaders at the moment for although they are five points adrift the Londoners have a game in hand.

Should they manage to take full points off Tottenham in the match-of-the-day at Stamford Bridge, Chelsea will emerge as serious contenders to become the first London club to lift the championship since Arsenal in 1971.

Kratzmann sweeps Scanlon aside

MELBOURNE (R) — Australia's Mark Kratzmann continued to defy his critics Friday after beating American Bill Scanlon to sweep into the semifinals of the \$75,000 Victorian Open tennis tournament.

Kratzmann, 19, brushed aside Scanlon on the comeback trail after a knee injury, in straight sets 6-3, 6-4.

Former Australian Open champion Mark Edmondson showed

a long awaited return to singles form as he battled past South Australian Open champion Eddie Edwards of South Africa.

Edmondson outlasted Edwards 6-3, 3-6, 7-5 and now faces American Jonathan Canter who had few problems in his 6-2, 6-3 quarter-final win over South Australian Brod Dyke.

In the other semifinal Kratzmann will take on another Australian, Peter Doohan, who defeated

little-known South African Michael Robertson 7-5, 6-1.

Kratzmann said after his victory he felt the pressure had been lifted from him after a string of poor performances since joining the senior ranks.

"That's the best I've played," the former world number one junior said. "I haven't been confident on any of my volleys but I've started to serve better and the volleys have become easier."

Becker calls for Bungert to be fired

BONN (R) — Wimbledon champion Boris Becker Friday called for Wilhelm Bungert to be fired as captain of the West German Davis Cup team and replaced by his personal trainer Guenther Bosch.

In an interview with the mass-circulation Bild newspaper Becker, 18, said Bungert had proved of little help to the players in West Germany's 3-2 defeat against Sweden in last weekend's Davis Cup final in Munich.

Becker, who woo both his singles, said: "Bungert was a player,

Bosch is a trainer. There is a world of difference between trainers and players... Bosch sees things that you as a player do not see."

The teenager said Bosch could have helped West Germany's second singles player Michael Westphal beat Sweden's Stefan Edberg in Sunday's decisive final.

"Michael was alone. Encouragements like 'come on, keep trying, stay calm, you'll do it' are no use. My grandmother could do that," Becker said.

"I hope Bungert does not feel

attacked as a person. He is a good man. But he does not fit in with our tennis of today," he said.

Bungert told Bild he did not hold Becker's remarks against the player and believed he was "only a mouthpiece for the media behind him."

He said he understood more than Bosch how a player felt in critical situations. He planned to discuss Becker's comments with national tennis officials and would not stay in the post if he was no longer wanted.


Survey names U.S. as top athletics nation

PARIS (R) — The United States replaced the Soviet Union as the world's top athletics nation this year, according to a survey published Thursday by the French

sports magazine L'Equipe.

A table published Wednesday put the American men in first place for the 11th year in a row

while an analysis Thursday showed the Russian women first ahead of East Germany with the United States third.



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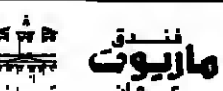
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Andreas Thiel, West Germany's top goal keeper at the Handball Super Cup, defends his goal against a Czech attack during a match played in Dortmund recently (Photo INE/Nordert Schmidt)

Bubka named top Soviet sportsman

MOSCOW (R) — Pole vault world record holder Sergei Bubka was Friday named Soviet sportsman of the year ahead of new world chess champion Garry Kasparov.

A poll of Soviet sports writers put high jump world record holder Igor Paklin in third place ahead of gymnast Yuri Korolyov.

Kuwait wins police volleyball

ABU DHABI (R) — Kuwait beat Algeria 3-1 to win the second Arab Police Volleyball Championship here Thursday. Bahrain took third place with a 3-0 win over the United Arab Emirates.

Police teams from 11 Arab forces took part in the week-long championship.

South Korea to build tower for Olympics

SEOUL (R) — South Korea will build a huge tower to commemorate hosting the 1988 Olympics in Seoul, city officials said.

The tower, to be completed by June 1988 at a cost of about \$11.2 million, will be 91 metres high, 140 metres wide and 75 metres long.

Apollo reveals in rough conditions

SYDNEY (R) — Australian yacht Apollo left the 1985 Sydney-Hobart fleet for dead Friday, revealing in the heavy conditions which have already accounted for 21 boats.

The giant greek-hulled maxi, skippered by Warwick Rooklyn, was at least five miles ahead of fellow Australian Ragamuffin powering into the Bass Strait on the second day of the 630-mile race.

Victorian sloop Spirit of Queensland was lying third, followed by another Australian yacht, Windward Passage.

New South Wales sloop Sagacious was leading the race on corrected times ahead of Drake's Prayer and Britain's Highland Fling.

Sagacious has an experienced crew including two helmsmen from last year's Hobart winner Indian Pacific, Steve Kulmar and Doo Jacobs.

The surprise casualty in Friday's growing list of retirements was Britain's leading southern Cross Cup team boat, Paoda.

The race, which began Thursday with 179 yachts crossing the starting line, is expected to end on Sunday.

The nine-man crew of the Australian yacht Argus were reported

safe early Friday after their 12.1-metre sloop began sinking off the New South Wales south coast late Thursday night.

The Argus split its timber hull in rough seas 30 miles east of Montagu Island and radioed for assistance saying the crew might have to take to the life raft.

Race officials directed the 25,000 tonne tanker Paladuna to the yacht's assistance within an hour.

A further radio call said the Argus' crew had stemmed the inflow and that they were confident of getting the yacht to a port safely under tow.

Spurs force back L.A. Lakers

NEW YORK (AP) — The San Antonio Spurs on Thursday banded Los Angeles Lakers only their fourth loss in 28 National Basketball Association (NBA) games, 109-91.

The Spurs took a 51-39 half-time lead and coasted the rest of the way against the defending NBA champions as forward Steve Johnson scored 26 points and seldom-used guard Jon Sundvold added 18.

Elsewhere, it was New Jersey 124, Detroit 116; New York 113, Chicago 96; Milwaukee 105, Indiana 87; Houston 106, Utah 99; Dallas 105, Phoenix 98; Golden State 131, Sacramento 121; and Philadelphia 117, Los Angeles Clippers 108.

Nets 124, Pistons 116

New Jersey continued to roll, winning its fifth straight game and ninth in its last 10 outings behind the strong play of Buck Williams. The power forward scored 14 of his 26 points as New Jersey outscored Detroit 39-18 during an 11 minute spao of the first half.

Knicks 113, Bulls 96

New York played without rookie centre Patrick Ewing, but still beat Chicago for its fourth straight victory as Pat Cummings scored 22 points. Ewing, who sustained a slightly sprained knee Wednesday, did not accompany the team to Chicago. Chicago's George Gervin led all scorers with 30 points.

Rockets 106, Jazz 99

Houston's 14-game home winning streak was in jeopardy until

Lewis Lloyd spearheaded a 10-0 fourth-quarter run that saw the Rockets turn an 87-80 deficit into a 90-87 advantage. Lloyd scored six of his 21 points during the spree, and the Rockets never trailed again. Utah was led by Abdul Dautley with 35 points.

Backs 105, Pacers 87

Paul Pressey scored 22 points for Milwaukee, which beat Indiana despite the loss of star guard Sidney Moncrieff, who was kickeled in the knee during practice Thursday.

Warriors 105, Suns 98

Mark Aguirre, playing for the first time after a two-game suspension, scored 24 points and Dale Ellis scored 13 of his 17 as Dallas rallied in the fourth quarter against Phoenix. Larry Nance scored 33 points for the Suns.

Kasparov denounces rematch as nonsense

MOSCOW (AP) — World chess champion Garry Kasparov said Friday it is nonsense that he must play his compatriot and rival Anatoly Karpov again for the world chess crown in February.

Kasparov, who captured the title from Karpov Nov. 9 after a 24-game struggle, criticised the World Chess Federation (Fide) for changing the rules of the world championship three times in five years.

Kasparov says he is no critic of communist systems

In an interview with the official news agency TASS, he stressed, however, that he is no dissident and attacked what he called provocative attempts in the West to paint him as a critic of the communist system.

Kasparov, who has just beaten Dutch player Jan Timman 4-2 in an exhibition match in the Netherlands, said the exhaustion that results from the prolonged struggle between himself and Karpov might open the way for Timman to break the Soviet hold on the world title.

The Dutchman is the only non-Soviet left in the challenge matches for the world chess crown.

Kasparov, 22 and Karpov, 34, began their long battle over the chess crown in September 1984. Their unlimited match was stopped after an unprecedented 48 games with Karpov leading 5-3.

Fide President Florencio Campomanes, a close friend of Karpov's, halted the match because he said everyone was exhausted and ordered it restarted in September with a 0-0 score and a 24-game limit.

Kasparov, who had seemed to be gaining on Karpov when play was stopped, bitterly attacked the decision.

Kasparov triumphed 13-11 in the series started in September, but under new Fide rules for the match, Karpov had the right to a rematch within six months if he lost his title.

On Dec. 5, Karpov said he wanted the rematch scheduled to run from Feb. 10 through April 21. Fide has received bids from London and Leningrad to act as hosts, but a venue has not been announced.

Kasparov had made no public comment on Karpov's decision until Friday, when TASS said he was interviewed in Bonn, West Germany.

"As up till now, I consider the rematch a nonsense," Kasparov was quoted as saying. "The previous Kasparov-Karpov match was interrupted, it was said, by humane notions. But one can hardly call it a successful decision to carry out one more match in three months... and after it, one more match at the end of 1986."

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Bloody clashes claim 68 lives in S. Africa on Christmas eve

Pretoria troops cross into Swaziland

DURBAN, South Africa (R) — Bloody clashes between rival black tribesmen overshadowed South Africa's continuing inter-racial conflict during the Christmas holiday.

At least 68 blacks died altogether during the country's most violent Christmas in memory. Police said they had not yet established the cause of the pitched battles between 2,000 Zulus and 3,000 Pongos at Kwa-Makhuta, a shanty town near the Indian Ocean port of Durban, in which 58 people died.

Chiefs from the two tribes will hold negotiations Friday to try and smooth over their differences, a police spokesman in Durban said. Lt. Bob Sanker said there had been no clashes in the area since Christmas Day. A unit of police was still keeping the peace, Lt. Sanker said, but he would not say how many.

Members of the opposing tribes, mostly immigrants from the neighbouring nominally-independent black homeland of Transkei, used shotguns, knives and sticks in the fighting on Tuesday night and Wednesday.

Pongos told reporters it stemmed from a long-standing dispute with the Zulus over Pondo presence in an area nominally reserved for the six-million-strong Zulus, the largest tribe in South Africa.

One of hundreds of Pongos patrolling Kwa-Makhuta Thursday told reporters: "Zulus attacked us because they don't want us to live here, so we had to kill them. If they attack again we will kill them again."

Elsewhere in the country, police said 10 black men died in renewed township protests which have claimed well over 1,000 lives since February last year.

A police spokesman said all but two of the 10 died during attacks by blacks on blacks.

He said three were killed during a fight between rival anti-apartheid groups at Umbegweni township, near Paarl, north of Cape Town.

There have been frequent clashes between the non-racial United Democratic Front (UDF), the biggest internal group opposing Pretoria's white-led government, and the Azanian Peoples Organisation, which rejects the help of whites in fighting minority rule.

The latest victim was killed Thursday when police opened shotgun fire on protesters pelting a patrol with stones near Fort Beaufort, Cape province.

Many townships around the country observed a "black Christmas," with no drinking allowed, to commemorate victims of unrest during 1985.

Meanwhile Swazi villagers said Friday South African troops crossed the border into Swaziland several times this week but a spokesman in South Africa said he could not confirm the reports.

Villagers said South African troops crossed into the sparsely-populated south eastern corner of Swaziland near Lavusima and threatened to attack them if they gave shelter to guerrillas.

Royal Swazi Police spokesman Solly Mkhonta said he was aware that South African troops had crossed the border but had no details.

South Africa recently repeated warnings to its black neighbours that it would ignore international boundaries in pursuit of guerrillas after a series of border incidents.

But in Pretoria a South African Defence Force (SADF) spokesman said no confirmation of the Swazi reports could be found despite all possible enquiries.

"If more facts become available, the SADF will obviously be prepared to investigate further. The republic of South Africa and the SADF wishes to live at peace with its neighbour Swaziland," he added.

Residents said a South African patrol fired at a man trying to cross

the border fence illegally on Tuesday. He was not hit and fled into the bush on the Swazi side.

They said border patrols, which usually number eight to 10 men, crossed into Swaziland four or five times that evening and the next day and warned people they would attack them if they sheltered members of the African National Congress (ANC).

The Times of Swaziland newspaper quoted a defence force official stationed in the area as saying security had been stepped up since the incident.

The ANC, outlawed in South Africa, claimed responsibility for several recent land mine blasts near South Africa's northern border with Zimbabwe which killed six whites and a black farm worker.

In recent years, South Africa has launched cross-border attacks against what it said were guerrilla targets in Lesotho, Mozambique, Angola and Botswana.

There have been a number of minor incidents on the Swazi-South African border this year and on two occasions suspected smugglers were shot dead by South African troops.

Swaziland secretly signed a non-aggression treaty with South Africa in 1982 and has the closest ties with Pretoria of all its black neighbours.

Gandhi launches Congress centenary celebrations

BOMBAY (R) — Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi opened celebrations Friday marking the centenary of India's ruling Congress Party with a call on supporters to prepare for a second century of challenges.

Wearing a white cap made of homespun cotton, Mr. Gandhi, India's youngest leader and the party's president, was serenaded by traditional music as he hoisted the party's orange, white and green flag emblazoned with a spinning wheel.

Bugles sounded and drums beat when he arrived at the open ground where Mahatma Gandhi launched his "Quit India" movement against British rule in August 1942.

Security was tight. Sharpshooters were posted on nearby rooftops and visitors were checked with metal detectors.

About 7,000 policemen were deployed for the three-day celebrations and Police Commissioner D.S. Soman told Reuters: "Our security arrangements are foolproof."

Women wearing white saris with green borders sang patriotic songs as about 200 people including senior cabinet ministers and veteran Congress members watched the ceremony.

Next door was the unpretentious Gokuldas Tejpal Sanskrit School where the party's 72 founders, who included Britain Alan Octavian Hume, gathered 100 years ago to launch the Indian National Congress, forerunner of the present Congress (I) Party.

Splitter groups broke away from the Congress in 1969 and 1978, but it has ruled the country for 35 years. It was renamed the Congress (I) — the I stands for India — by Indira Gandhi, who led it until her assassination last year.

"The Congress Party must re-dedicate itself to the service of the nation for the next hundred years the same way as it has done in the past hundred," Mr. Gandhi said.

A Congress spokesman said about 300 foreign delegates from 65 countries would attend the centenary celebrations.

They included veteran Pakistani politician Abdul Ghafoor Khan, 96, known as the "Frontier Gandhi" and a close associate of Mahatma Gandhi.

Killings, strike keep tension high in Punjab

NEW DELHI (R) — Three Sikh temple guards were killed in a fight with swords, spears and guns Friday and a strike by militant Hindus shut many shops as a new cycle of unrest swept India's Punjab state.

Police in the Punjab capital of Chandigarh told Reuters the temple guards, known as Nihangs, were killed in a clash between two groups of the warrior sect at Fatehgarh Sahib in southern Punjab's Patiala district.

The fighting broke out after an argument over which group would lead a religious procession of about 30,000 Sikhs.

The procession will mark the execution 300 years ago of two sons of Guru Gobind Singh, the 10th and last guru of the Sikh religion. The sons were beheaded behind walls by the region's Mughal ruler.

Nihangs, who dress in traditional costume and carry swords, spears and guns, guard Sikh religious shrines and are regarded as the elite warrior branch of the religion.

Police said the Nihang killings were not connected with Sikh extremist attacks in the past two days in which nine persons were killed and one injured.

Hindu-Sikh riots erupted last Tuesday in the north-west Punjab town of Gurdaspur leaving one person dead and at least 12 injured.

The right-wing Hindu Shiv Sena group called a strike of shopkeepers in the state Friday to protest at the killing.

Police said most Hindu shopkeepers in 10 of Punjab's 12 dis-

tricts obeyed the strike call but Sikh businessmen opened their shops. They said the strike was peaceful and there were no reports of incidents.

An indefinite curfew was in force in Gurdaspur to head off more clashes over the building of shops near a Hindu temple.

Since October more than 40 people have been killed and 100 injured in attacks in Punjab, mainly by Sikh extremists fighting for a separate Sikh nation.

Meanwhile, seven people were killed when their houses collapsed in pounding rain while parts of India's mountainous north shivered under heavy snowfalls in freezing cold, the United Nations (UN) reported Friday.

The deaths occurred in the Jammu region of northern Jammu and Kashmir state Thursday, the news agency said.

It said the Kashmir Valley was cut off after heavy snowfalls caused landslides, blocking roads to the state capital Srinagar.

The Press Trust of India (PTI) said Sunday that five members of a family were killed after lightning struck their house in northern Himachal Pradesh state, setting it ablaze.

The deaths took place Thursday night in the town of Baradi, near the state capital Simla, PTI said. It added that the head of the family survived because he was not at home.

Meteorologists reported rain and snow fell widely in the northern Himalayan region and had forecast more cold weather, UNI added.

Peking returns hijacked plane to Soviet Union

PEKING (R) — A Soviet airliner hijacked to China last week has been returned to the Soviet Union, the Soviet embassy has said.

An embassy official told Reuters by telephone the Antonov-24 of the national airline Aeroflot was returned at the weekend.

"All problems have been settled after negotiations between the two governments in both countries," he said. He gave no details of the fate of the hijacker.

Unconfirmed reports said the hijacker was a lone man with a knife, possibly one of the crew.

The Chinese Foreign Ministry said Wednesday the crew and all passengers had returned to the Soviet Union on Saturday after the plane was forced to land in

China's remote north eastern Heilongjiang province.

The Soviet Union Wednesday thanked Peking for its cooperation over the hijack of a Soviet airliner on an internal flight across the border into China.

The first mention in the Soviet state media of the hijack, which took place last Thursday, came in a brief statement issued by the official news agency TASS.

It said the Antonov-24 of the Soviet Airline Aeroflot was forced to China as a result of "actions by an armed criminal" on board. Chinese authorities had found the plane and returned passengers and crew as soon as possible, TASS said, but gave no further details.

Etna eruption kills 1

CATANIA, Sicily (R) — A fresh earth tremor has caused slight damage on the slopes of Mount Etna where a volcanic eruption Wednesday killed one person and injured 14, but government officials said the lava flow had stopped.

The latest quake at 3.34 a.m. (0224 GMT) measured four points on the open-ended Richter Scale and slightly damaged several buildings in villages at the foot of the volcano, officials of the Civil Protection Ministry said.

Scientists who flew over the volcano in a helicopter Thursday morning reported, however, that the flow of lava had stopped.

The molten lava began to str-

eam from a fissure about 2,700 metres above sea level after the eruption early Wednesday.

It split into four branches and had travelled about five kilometres by Wednesday night, but geologists said it posed no danger to inhabited areas.

Wednesday's casualties were caused by an earthquake which accompanied the eruption and flattened a small hotel.

Officials in Catania met with mayors of four villages in the earthquake zone. They said it was decided to identify the houses which were least quake-proof and advise the inhabitants to move out for several days.

Greek newspaper charged for publishing secret papers

ATHENS (AP) — The publisher and three staff members of a left-wing Athens newspaper that printed top secret documents from a recent espionage case have been charged with revealing state secrets, a spokesman for the Athens district attorney's office said Friday.

District Attorney Stelios Mavropoulos also imposed a news blackout on the case, which involved revelations made in the United States by a Soviet spy who defected in Athens last May, the spokesman said.

The charges were brought Dec. 24, two days after Kyriakaki Eleftherotypia (Sunday Free Press) published two documents that it claimed were sent by the chief of Greece's Central Intelligence Service (KYP) to authorities investigating the case.

One document comprised a report by Lt. Gen. George Politis, head of KYP, after he returned from questioning the defector, Sergei Bokhane, in the United States, the newspaper said.

Publisher Avgerinos Teg-

opoulos, editor Kostas Skouras, his deputy Panagiotis Koliopoulos and reporter George Mavros will face criminal charges of revealing state secrets, the spokesman, who asked not to be named, said.

Two Greek businessmen and a Greek Navy lieutenant were arrested here last September for allegedly selling high technology to the Soviet Union. All three are jailed pending trial on espionage charges.

According to the documents published by Kyriakaki Eleftherotypia, Navy Lt. Vassilios Serapoulos had been passing information to Soviet diplomats here since 1977. Among them was Bokhane, identified by the United States as deputy chief of Soviet Military Intelligence (GRU) in Athens.

Premier Andreas Papandreu told parliament earlier this month that two other arrests were made. Both conservative and Communist opposition leaders blamed the Socialist government for the news blackout on the Bokhane affair.

Angolan rebels reportedly kill 76 government troops

LISBON (R) — Angola's UNITA rebels said Friday they had killed 76 government troops and captured two towns during recent attacks in northern and central provinces.

UNITA (National Union for the Total Independence of Angola) said in a statement issued in Lisbon that its forces captured the town of Macocola in northern Uige province and Mungo in central Huambo province on Dec. 20 and 23 respectively.

During the same period, UNITA forces also overran a government position at Dange-

la-Memba in Lunda province and attacked Brito-Godins in the province of Malange, UNITA said. A government column was ambushed in Kuanza Sul province, it added.

Five government soldiers were captured in the clashes and 16 government vehicles destroyed, the rebel statement said.

UNITA, which has fought Angola's Marxist government since Angolan independence from Portugal in 1975, said its own losses in the fighting were eight killed, 29 wounded and two missing.

Gonzalez vows to abide by NATO referendum

MADRID (R) — Spain's Socialist Prime Minister Felipe Gonzalez has said he would pull out of NATO if he failed to win a referendum next year on continued Spanish membership.

"If the Spanish people decide that national interests are not better defended within the Atlantic alliance... I will act in accordance with the people's decision," he

told Spanish television Thursday night.

Mr. Gonzalez said he considered the results of the referendum morally but not legally binding.

Spanish opponents of NATO have called on Mr. Gonzalez to abide by the outcome, even if a majority voted for withdrawal.

North Korea joins 1968 non-proliferation group

NEW YORK (R) — North Korea has joined the 1968 non-proliferation treaty aimed at limiting the spread of nuclear weapons, the New York Times reported Friday.

Quoting Reagan administration officials, the paper said the move was considered in Washington to be an important development

because it would keep nuclear weapons from being made on the Korean peninsula.

North Korea has been reported to be building a nuclear reactor capable of producing plutonium, a key element in the construction of nuclear weapons, U.S. officials said.

Kabul broadens government base on war anniversary

ISLAMABAD (Agencies) — The Soviet-backed Afghan government has broadened its base by bringing several non-Communists into the cabinet on the sixth anniversary of Soviet military intervention.

Kabul said Thursday night 14 men were named to government posts after approval by the Revolutionary Council Presidium headed by President Babrak Karmal.

Most, including a new deputy premier, were from outside the Communist People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan (PDPA) and belonged to various ethnic groups.

The move, announced on the eve of Friday's anniversary, seemed aimed at winning over public opinion as the Kabul government, backed by an estimated 115,000 Soviet troops, fights Islamic guerrillas who want to topple it.

Western diplomats reported tighter security in Kabul ahead of the anniversary, with Soviet troops often patrolling streets and protection for Communist leaders the most thorough ever witnessed.

They said people would be waiting to see if there were any guerrilla raids as rebels had still managed to fire some rockets and plant bombs in the capital in recent weeks.

Along with tighter security, the Afghan rulers are trying to win popular support with calls for

understanding and cooperation between them and their opponents.

Karmal, who was installed in power on Dec. 27, 1979, after about 80,000 Soviet troops were airlifted into Kabul to prop up a faltering PDPA, called last month for a "national compromise."

Last Saturday, the government said a new commission had been set up to look after refugees returning from Pakistan and promised to give them a subsistence allowance, accommodation, jobs and land.

The most senior newcomer to government is Said Amanuddin Amin, a non-party man and a textile executive, named a deputy prime minister in the cabinet headed by Prime Minister Sultan Ali Kishmamd.

"He is a reliable social personality among industrialists and businessmen," Kabul Radio said. Four other non-party members were named "adviser ministers" in various ministries. Five men, two identified by the radio as non-party, were named deputy ministers and three others, two non-party, as advisers in different ministries.

Mohammad Akbar Kargar, a former member of Afghan Radio and a Pashtu language writer, was named president of the Press and Publications Committee with the rank of minister, Kabul Radio

Strains appear in India-Sri Lanka ties

COLOMBO (R) — Cracks in relations with India appeared Friday as Colombo asked Delhi for the text of remarks by Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi which criticised Sri Lanka's military policies.

Foreign Ministry sources said Colombo asked for a copy of a statement Mr. Gandhi made last Tuesday in which he criticised stepped up fighting in Sri Lanka and said military action would not solve the island's ethnic crisis.

The Independent Island newspaper quoted Information Minister Anandadasa De Alwis as saying the cabinet would discuss the matter on Jan. 3.

The newspaper also criticised Mr. Gandhi in an editorial and said: "Someone is feeding him wrong information deliberately."

Local newspapers published prominently Friday a statement issued by the Sri Lankan High

Commission in Delhi about the Press Trust of India (PTI) and United Nations of India (UNI) news agencies.

The statement said the agencies issued "highly exaggerated and distorted versions of incidents involving security forces and terrorists in northern and eastern provinces of Sri Lanka."

It said defensive action by the security forces had been distorted by Tamil separatist organisations based in the south Indian city of Madras.

Remarks by Mr. Gandhi and Indian External Affairs Minister Bal Ram Bhagat calling on the Sri Lankan government to restrain its security forces have strained relations between the two countries.

Security forces shot dead two guerrillas trying to escape from a military camp in Sri Lanka's eastern province Wednesday, a Def-

ence Ministry spokesman said Thursday.

He told Reuters that the dead, both members of the Eelam Revolutionary Organisation of Students guerrilla group, were among 600 people arrested on Sunday during search operations in Amparai district.

He said 42 of them were identified as members of guerrilla groups fighting to set up a Tamil state in the north and east and were detained, while the rest were released after investigations.

Members of two rival guerrilla groups fought each other in a dispute over whether to allow people to attend church at Mullativu in the north Wednesday, the spokesman said.

Residents burying to church for Christmas mass fled when the clash began, he said. No casualties were reported.

for the withdrawal," he said.

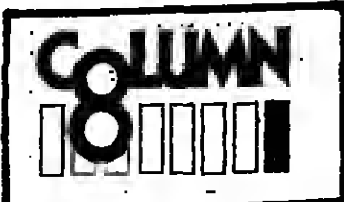
West Germany Thursday called on the Soviet Union to withdraw its troops from Afghanistan and return the country to non-aligned independence.

In a statement on the eve of the sixth anniversary of the Soviet intervention, Foreign Minister Hans-Dietrich Genscher said the unbroken resistance of the Afghan people demonstrated that their will for self-determination was undiminished.

He said: "Our government appeals to the Soviet Union to consent to a lasting political solution to the conflict. The mediation efforts of the U.N. secretary general... point the way for withdrawal of Soviet troops and the restoration of independence and non-alignment to Afghanistan."

Communist Albania, commemorating six years of Soviet military intervention in Afghanistan, said Thursday all efforts to end armed resistance by the Afghan people have failed.

"Since the end of December 1979, when the Soviet troops set foot on the soil of Afghanistan, the Afghan people have put up a firm resistance against the occupiers and the mercenary army of the puppet regime of Kabul, inflicting on them heavy casualties in men and fighting material," said the state-run ATA news agency.



'Mentally deranged' man held in plane

RIYADH (AP) — A "mentally deranged" passenger was arrested aboard a Saudi Arabian jetliner Friday, after he brandished a blade and "acted suspiciously in midair," a Civil Aviation official reported. The Saudi flight 255 was on its way to Riyadh from Karachi with 313 passengers and crew aboard when, an hour before landing, the unidentified passenger "produced the blade menacingly," said the official in a statement distributed by the official Saudi Press Agency. "The passenger was apprehended at once and the plane landed safely at King Khalid International Airport on time," he said. "It was later revealed that the arrested passenger was mentally deranged."

Chinese youths are misinformed on pop stars

XIAN, China (R) — Pop singer Prince is the son of Britain's Queen Elizabeth, Michael Jackson is a former U.S. president and Madonna "owns all the fast-food restaurants in America." Those were some of the responses to a poll on Western pop music carried out among 400 university students in the north western Chinese city of Xian. Many of those surveyed said they listened to music programmes broadcast by Voice of America, the British Broadcasting Corporation or Radio Australia. All said they knew and enjoyed the music of Swedish group ABBA. Michael Jackson won ten per cent recognition, Madonna seven per cent, Bruce Springsteen five per cent and the Beatles four per cent. Only one student confused Madonna with the McDonald's hamburger empire and another thought she was Princess Diana, but four per cent thought the Beatles were "a typical middle class family living in the United States or Canada." As for Sting, eight per cent thought he was a woman and four per cent a dangerous insect.

Mystery man gives \$10,000 to poor

LOS ANGELES (R) — An unknown man gave a Christmas Eve present of \$10,000 in \$10 notes to the poor and homeless at the midnight mission in Los Angeles. "We asked him who he is, but he would not tell us," Clancy Imbault, who runs the mission, said. "He said if he told us it would take away his joy of giving." The man took half an hour to hand out his money. One woman said she would use her \$10 to buy food for her baby, another said he would send his daughter a Christmas present — and others said they would use the money to buy more wine. "The money is for them to use as they see fit," Imbault said.

Jewels, coins lost in Christmas robbery

NEW YORK (R) — The Christmas spirit came to an abrupt end for a pair of Manhattan antique dealers who returned to work and found their posh shops looted of more than \$3 million in jewellery and coins. The proprietors of Antiques Manor and Eva's Antiques found that over the holiday thieves had broken in by smashing through a cement wall. Police said the point of entry could not be seen from the street because it was at the back of a garden. The thieves made off with \$2 million worth of gold jewellery and gold and silver coins from the Manor and \$1 million worth of similar loot from Eva's. A police spokesman said an inventory of the stolen goods was incomplete and the value could increase.

Santa arrests drunken driver

VANCOUVER, British Columbia (AP) — Santa Claus, on horseback instead of behind eight reindeer, collared a drunken driving suspect, police say. Santa was actually constable Andrew Hobbs, a member of the city's mounted police squad out doing a bit of Christmas public relations work. "You can run into trouble with people when you're dressed as Santa Claus," Hobbs said after making the arrest. He and his partner, constable Garry Lester, were in Stanley Park distributing candy canes to children when they decided to head downtown. "Constable Hobbs was in his uniform of the day and I was in my uniform of the day," Lester said.

GOREN BRIDGE

BY CHARLES GOREN
AND OMAR SHARIF
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PLAY IT UPSIDE-DOWN

Both vulnerable. South deals.

NOTES

♠ A542

♥ Q76

♦ 32

♣ QJ108

WEST EAST

♠ KQ ♠ J109863

♥ 100 ♥ J843

♦ 109864 ♦ QJ5

♣ 9764 ♣ Void

SOUTH

♠ 7

♥ AK52

♦ AK7

♣ AK532

The bidding:

South West North East

2 ♠ Pass 2 NT Pass

3 ♠ Pass 4 ♠ Pass

4 NT Pass 5 ♠ Pass

7 ♠ Pass Pass Pass

Opening lead: King of ♠.

Your natural impulse is to treat your hand as the master and try to ruff your losers in dummy. However, when there are high trumps on the table, you can often increase the number of tricks you can make by taking the ruffs in your hand and using the table's trumps to draw the fangs of the enemy.

North-South wasted no time in getting to an excellent grand slam in clubs. South's opening grand slam was artificial and strong, and

North's response showed a balanced hand of at least 6 points. South introduced his club suit and, once he was raised, he simply checked on aces and then gambled on a grand slam.

When dummy came down declarer could count 11 tricks. While he might have been able to ruff a diamond and a heart on the board, that would need a 2-2 trump split or a very favorable lie in hearts. Declarer wanted better odds than